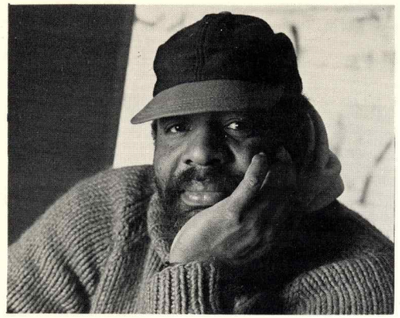
January 7 - March 6, 1987

RUSSELL T. GORDON

MASKS

WEST DADE REGIONAL LIBRARY 9445 CORAL WAY



RUSSELL T. GORDON

BORN:
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

EDUCATION:
1962 B.F.A., Temple University, Tyler School of Art, Philadelphia
1966 M.S., University of Wisconsin, Madison
1967 M.F.A., University of Wisconsin, Madison

SELECTED AWARDS:
George C. Marshall Fellowship, Denmark
National Endowment for the Arts Grant in Painting
McDowell Fellowship, McDowell Colony, New Hampshire

SELECTED COLLECTIONS:
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Cincinnati Museum of Art, Cincinnati, Ohio
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Oakland Museum, Oakland, California
Canada Council Art Bank
Miami-Dade Public Library, Miami, Florida
I.B.M., San Jose, California

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS:
The Allrich Gallery, San Francisco, California
Waddington & Gorce, Montreal, Canada
University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah
Memorial Union Gallery, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona
Joy Moos Gallery, Miami, Florida

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS:
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York
San Francisco Museum of Art, San Francisco, California
Cincinnati Museum, Cincinnati, Ohio
Crocker Art Gallery, Sacramento, California
San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, California

MASKS

Sorcery, fetishism and their implications may seem out of place in our society with its emphasis on rationalism and non-mystic attitudes. However, primal cultures and their traditions have continued to dominate the minds and lives of many people, the passage of time notwithstanding.

The historical presence of such culture in my work is undeniable and the influence of these same cultures on contemporary art is profound.

Cover: *Fancy Phantom*, 1986, mixed media collage. 40″x30″

These masks are a direct reflection (sometimes conscious-sometimes unconscious) in form and feeling from various "primal cultures" and they are also a direct reflection in form and feeling of today's western culture. In other words, this is contemporary art made by a contemporary artist fully aware of the language of today's art world.

A limited range of components, such as shape, form and colour, are used in combination to express ideas. Many artists place emphasis on certain characters and organize specific sequences that reflect their concerns. They often create a language that carries a code in which ancient and contemporary notions converge. Instinctive and formal knowledge are bound together. The concept expressed couples with the memory evoked, and, of course, more so in contemporary times, with the idio-syncracies that are unique to the personality of the artist. A marriage of form and content ... Art and spiritualism (religion and/or magic).

I am not certain that any of this is possible but I love the questions and have a wonderful time trying to realize the answers.

What should be discerned is the marriage of "primal culture" with a temperament that has been shaped out of the black's unique experience in North America.

Russell T. Gordon

1. *Demonic Demigod*, 1986 mixed media, collage, 40″x30″
2. *Creepy Crazed Creature*, 1986 mixed media, collage 40″x30″
3. *Juke Joint Jehovah #2*, 1986 mixed media, collage, 40″x30″
4. *Supernal Supreme Superstar* 1986 mixed media, collage, 40″x30″
5. *Superfluous Superhuman*, 1986 mixed media, collage, 40″x30″
6. *Egregious Egocentric*, 1986 mixed media, collage, 40″x30″
7. *Fancy Phantom*, 1986 mixed media, collage, 40″x30″
8. *Spasmodic Specter*, 1986 mixed media, collage, 40″x30″
9. *Spent Spirit*, 1986 mixed media, collage, 40″x30″
10. *Orating Oracle*, 1986 mixed media, collage, 40″x30″

Suggested Reading:

751.4 B368p — Bearden, Romare. The painter's mind; a study of the relationships of structure and space. New York, Crown, 1969.

R 759.06 C568g — Cinchy, Bodo. Great modern paintings. New York, Putnam, 1969.

759.06 G583n — Godfrey, Tony. The new image: painting in the 1980s. New York, Abbeville Press, 1986.

R 759.3 K63sp — Klee, Paul. Paul Klee notebooks, volume 2: the nature of nature. London, Lund Humphries, 1973.

R 759.06 K96n — Kulterman, Udo. The new painting. New York, Praeger, 1969.

759.13 L421br — Lawrence, Jacob. Jacob Lawrence. New York, Whitney Museum of Art, 1974.

R 709.04 — "Primitivism" in 20th century art: affinity of the tribal and the modern, VOL I and II., ed. by William Rubin. New York, Museum of Modern Art, 1984.

709 S713o — Sorell, Walter. The other face: the mask in the arts. Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1973.

759.06 V887c — Vogt, Paul. Contemporary painting. New York, Abrams, 1981.

R 751.4 W511c — Wescher, Herta. Collage. New York, Abrams, 1968.

On behalf of the Miami-Dade Public Library System, I would like to thank the artist, Francine Du Bois, and Joy Moos of the Joy Moos Gallery, Miami for their support and encouragement of this exhibition.

Barbara Young
Project Director

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